



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Social Adjustment. By SCOTT NEARING. New York: Macmillan, 1911. 8vo, pp. xvi+377. \$1.50 net.

Dr. Nearing's book is a burning plea for a social crusade to sweep away all the external hindrances to the free and full development of every man, woman, and child in the community. While it bears on nearly every page the stamp of the influence of Professor Patten and Dr. Devine, it makes an independent and fresh contribution to social discussion. Originality is shown not so much in the handling of the specific problems surveyed as in their correlation, and in the stress laid on the features of social responsibility and curability common to all.

The general thesis advanced is the old Utopian doctrine of the universality of human capacity and the possibility of redressing all man's ills by changing the environment. Incidentally, it is doubtful if the term "adjustment," with its usual connotation of passive adaptation to the environment, is suited to describe processes which in the main involve changing the environment to give the individual freer play. In his main contention the author expounds with contagious enthusiasm one side of the truth in the age-long controversy as to the relative importance of heredity and environment, and probably the side of truth which most needs emphasis to hearten effort. Yet it is curious that in a study which so confidently and unreservedly asserts the all-importance of environment, no attempt is made to meet the arguments of that other and equally up-to-date and equally confident school which is asserting that only in eugenics is to be found social salvation. It may be that the eugenic contention that social reform is unavailing so long as we perpetuate the weaker rather than the stronger stocks can be disproved—or, better, reconciled—but disproof is not afforded by silence nor by a few sweeping and unsubstantiated statements as to the unimportance of heredity in the eyes of "modern science."

In the applications made of the general theory to specific problems, the author provides a good summary of current discussion and a connected program of social striving. The topics considered are: educational uniformity, low wages and standards, congestion of population, dependence of women, the menace of large families, the decadence of the home, the duration of working life, overwork, dangerous trades, industrial accidents, child labor, and unemployment. With regard to each the author seeks to show that existing maladjustments are due to economic causes, that grave social penalties are paid, and that remedy is possible. This systematic approach makes for clearness, though this simplifying is secured at the expense of tenability, when throughout it is sought to explain environment solely in terms of economics. The danger is common to all environmental theories of letting the overshadowed individual fade into abstraction, become a normalized card-index unit, a power of one dimension, economic or other, divested of all racial or religious or family

peculiarities. The first seven topics are those regarding which the author considers the public conscience most needs awakening, and which he handles in the freshest way. In the chapter in which the author breasts the tide of denunciation of race suicide, he recognizes the importance of quality rather than quantity in the population, without, however, being led to consider the bearing of the points made on his general environment theory. In the discussion of overwork, the eight-hour day is accepted as the ideal, without any endeavor to discriminate between industries and climates, and it is assumed without discussion that legislative action is the only means for attaining the desired end of shorter hours. The implication on p. 209 that the eight-hour day in Australasia is primarily due to legislative activity is of course unwarranted. In the discussion of unemployment no mention is made of the possibilities of trade-union or government insurance, while sanction is given the discredited policy of government relief works. Whatever differences of opinion there may be, however, either on such points of detail or on the broader issue raised, few will read the volume without finding their thinking clarified on many points and their optimism heightened. It is an illustration and a justification of Dr. Patten's contention that "the place of the economist is on the firing-line of civilization."

O. D. SKELTON

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY
KINGSTON, CANADA

American Commercial Legislation before 1789. By ALBERT ANTHONY GIESECKE. New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1910. 8vo, pp. 167. \$1.50.

This monograph forms one of the Series in Political Economy and Public Law of the University of Pennsylvania. Chap. i gives a brief survey of the mercantile system, the development of England's commercial policy, and the methods used to supervise colonial legislation. In chap. ii the author shows that there was no unity in the policy of levying import and export duties, each colony acting independently. Duties were levied primarily for revenue, but in the case of certain imports, particularly those on rum, the protective element entered in, and even that of prohibition. Lower duties were levied on goods imported directly into a port from the place of growth or manufacture. At least five colonies attempted to encourage the shipping industry or direct trade by such means. Contrary to England's theory of the Acts of Trade, duties were levied on English goods in spite of protests from British merchants who complained that they were "treated as aliens in their own colonies" (p. 27). Later a royal order prohibited governors from assenting to such duties, and suspended the operation of such acts until approved by the crown. The author believes that it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine with any degree of precision the strength of the free-trade movement in the several colonies. Most of them were under the régime of free trade for short periods, but this condition was as often accidental as it was premeditated. Free trade was predominant in most commodities in the New England colonies, with the exception of Massachusetts, and the same was true of the middle colonies with the exception of New York. In the southern colonies no elaborate tariff system is found except